

Bedell Smith to Testify At Air - Power Inquiry

By Rowland Evans Jr.

WASHINGTON, Apr. 12.—Retired Gen. Walter Bedell Smith will testify Monday when a special Senate subcommittee opens its investigation of United States air power.

Gen. Smith, former American Ambassador to Russia and Under Secretary of State, will be the lead-off witness in the broad inquiry to be conducted by a Senate Armed Services subcommittee headed by Sen. Stuart Symington, D., Mo. Sen. Symington is a former Secretary of the Air Force who is regarded by many as a leading dark horse contender for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

The Senator's brief announcement today that the probe will start Monday gave no clue to future developments. It was learned, however, that the five-man subcommittee may also take testimony next week from Gen. Omar N. Bradley, U. S. A. ret., former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and perhaps Gen. Carl "Tooe" Spaatz, U. S. A. F., ret., and Gen. James H. Doolittle, U. S. A. F., ret.

U. S. Lag Charged

The air power probe was scheduled by Senate Democratic leaders, with no major opposition from Republicans, after charges by Sen. Symington and Sen. Henry M. Jackson, D., Wash., that the United States is lagging badly behind the Soviet Union in development and production of long-range ballistic missiles and intercontinental, high-speed bombers.

Last Monday President Eisenhower asked Congress to add \$547,100,000 to the defense appropriations request he sent to Congress in January. Half was earmarked for a production speed-up of the B-52 long-range jet bombers. The additional money, it was reported, would add about thirty B-52s to the Air Force's original order for 470.

Senate Democrats, while welcoming the President's proposal, said it did not go far enough. They hinted, too, that its timing was intended to take the edge off the Symington probe.

Military Consultant

Sen. Richard B. Russell, D., Ga., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has proposed a \$1,500,000,000 increase in Air Force Funds. Testimony developed at the Symington inquiry is likely to have a strong influence on the

final defense monies voted by Congress this year.

Gen. Smith left his position as Under Secretary of State in August, 1954. Since then he has been a frequent government consultant on atomic, military and international matters. A year ago he became chairman and president of AMF Atomics, Inc., a subsidiary of American Machine & Foundry Corp.

Administration defense policy, meanwhile, was defended in a House speech today by Rep. Bob Wilson, R., Calif., a member of the House Armed Services Committee. He told the House:

"I am at liberty to report that facilities for actual ballistic missiles, the ultimate weapon so-called, are under way."

The first week of the investigation is expected to range pretty widely over various defense problems. After that, it will get down to the specifics of air power with heaviest concentration on the adequacy of research and development funds, the missile and bomber programs and related questions of air power in the face of growing Soviet technology and production.

Fowler Hamilton, a New York attorney, is the subcommittee's chief counsel. Part of the subcommittee's staff has been drawn from the staff of the Preparedness subcommittee, headed by Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson, D., Tex., the Democratic leader.